THE POETRY OF GARDENS

BY

M. AUMÔNIER

TO THE

MANY FRIENDS

IN THE PAST WHO
HAVE HELPED ME
BY THEIR SWEET
ENCOURAGEMENT

AND TO ANY

WHO MAY BE ADDED IN THE
FUTURE MY
GRATEFUL THANKS

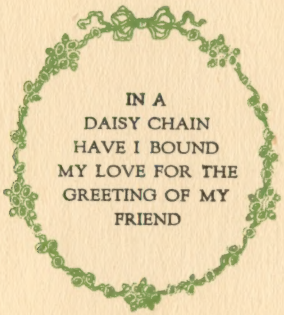
M. Aumonier.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

GARDENS IN SUN AND SHADE

THE GARDEN OF THE NIGHTINGALE

The Poetry of Gardens in Water-colour and Verse



BY

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VERSES

By M. Aumônier.

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HE GARDEN IS FULL OF MUSIC

Poets gather the airs and weave them into song for those that stand outside the Gate

Summer

hat a wonderful world!

After drab days of winter mist and rain, after dark nights of restless wind and storm, after the cold lifelessness of many Yesterdays—what a wonderful world!

THE AWAKENING

To-day, I woke with the dawn of it, to realise that the constant drip, drip of the rain had ceased; the noises of the mournful wind had passed and faded in the small sweet sounds of many birds—of birds with much to tell, like friends who have not met for long.

Like a sudden Benediction, before the day was well begun, the long lost sun lay all across my garden.

"Quick! Quick! Quick! Quick! Quick! Look at this, look at this, look at this!"

The wonder of it filled all the birds with strange excitement. Round and round they flew with uncertain flutterings as though suddenly called upon to sing their first Spring song before they were prepared.

The commotion was unusual. Out there in the garden something Big was happening!

Very soon I stood amongst them; we were old friends, the birds and I, and they had called to me to "Look at this!"

And there it was; *the Thing that had happened!*

From out a tuft of grass, strong and triumphant, perfect in the sunlight, a yellow Crocus.

Above the small green grasses it proudly raised its head, the little golden herald of those others so soon to follow.

Only yesterday I had looked eagerly from my window at the bare, sodden earth, and it seemed to me that the little brown bulbs were still asleep, waiting! waiting!

And now, suddenly, today, this great Thing happens before my own Spring song is ready.

What a wonderful world!

AS Yesterday so dark and full of
pain,
So grey and chill with sobbing
winter rain,
So like a cloud upon my tired brain?

Today, Today, what sudden joy is mine,
What moments filled with ecstasy divine,
To have, to hold, to drink like sparkling
wine!

Tomorrow once again may Winter bring,
Perhaps, perchance, what matter
anything?
I only know Today ..... Today is Spring!

Springtime

P in the sky a bird is singing,
Singing of joy for you and me,
Over the hills I hear it ringing
Was ever a song so gay and free?
Music and melody filling the air
God and the Spring-time everywhere.

SINGING

Here, midst the bluebells, my heart is singing
Atune with the honey and dew of the dawn,
Higher and higher my joy is winging
Up to the sun where all joy is born,
Music and melody filling the air,
God and the Spring-time everywhere.

Almost I think that the grasses are singing,
Each little blade with a sparkle of glee,
Each little dewdrop a message is bringing,
Summer is coming for you and for me.
Music and melody filling the air,
God and the Spring-time everywhere.

In days that are darkest when sorrow is singing
Her own plaintive song in her own minor key,
Still out of the shadows some joy is upspringing
Some wonder is waiting for you and for me.
Always some music haunting the air
Always some melody just everywhere.

have a Secret that nobody knows
But a Daisy patch and a deep red Rose.
Oh! I have a Secret that nobody knows!

The Daisies know, for they certainly heard,
But they, they never will breathe a word,
Tho' they smiled in the dark at the things they heard.

MY SECRET

Close to my heart lay the blushing Rose
Sharing the Secret that nobody knows,
And never will hear from the crimson Rose.

On that wonderful night, in a golden hour,
The Rose was changed to a Passion flower
In the hush of the night and the golden hour.

And the beautiful Secret that nobody knows
Lies hid in the heart of that crumpled Rose,
The Secret, My Secret that nobody knows.

hen roses deck the garden-way,
We needs must be as glad as they,
For who would dare to couch with care
Upon a rose-lit summer day?

When roses sparkle with the dew,
Our tired hearts are born anew
With eager hands we bind the strands—
Oh, what delight for me and you!

CLIMBING ROSES

When roses riot in the sun,
That is the time to watch the fun,
For in and out, they creep about,
Play hide and seek till day is done.

When roses on a summer's eve
In soft green dark their magic weave,
Their scented spell, makes all things well,
And saddest heart forgets to grieve.

The Garden of the Artist

ne morn a loneliness surpassing
death
Lay on my spirit like a
fearsome thing,
When sudden music stayed my sighing
breath
And little voices seemed to wake and sing.

IN THE GARDEN

Now close beside me, now so far away,
The tiny tunes went wandering here and
there,
So exquisite, so joyous, glad and gay,
Yet never, never, could I catch the air.

For who can catch the song the violet sings,
Or note the tunes of butterflies at play?
Or set the music of a wild bird's wings
Or hold the fragrance of a jasmine spray?

Yet, on that morn, in quiet leafy ways,
With only sighing sorrow for a mate,
I know I heard those little faery lays
That wander through the smallest garden
gate.

So loneliness, no more a fearsome thing
Has taken quiet peace for constant mate,
And many a morn I hear the songs they sing—
Those faery Ones within my garden gate.

an aught this Summer have
surpassed the scene
Which greets my wandring
eyes this day of rest?

For far and near
I see from here
Each tree a Queen in gold and crimson drest!

SUNDAY IN AUTUMN

And those already shorn of every leaf
In all their naked beauty proudly stand,
Whilst I adore
As ne'er before
This garden which is all a fairyland.

The drifting leaves a royal carpet spread,
Touched here and there with glint of early dew,
And softest green
Sun-tipped between
The deepest shadows from the grand old Yew.

In spring I watched the baby buds unfold,
The happy Daffs, and Daisies in the dell.
Next, peeping out
All round about
The summer Roses which I loved so well.

And now—these trees, on fire against the Blue,
Chanting their Hymn of Praise this Sabbath Day!
Tho' soon alas!
This hour must pass,
Such memories live, and cannot fade away.

ow beautiful the shadows all
around me,
That lie so softly on my garden
lawn,
And mingle with the golden gleams of sunlight,
This palpitating, perfect, summer morn.

SUN AND SHADE

How beautiful to dream, all toil forgetting,
For this brief hour to dream in restful ease,
To feel the creeping sun, and shade about me,
And listen to the happy noise of bees!

Just there beneath the great dark cedar
branches,
The richest, deepest, shadow of them all!
But even gayest roses have their shadow;
Even that baby bird upon the wall.

Come silent shadows, wrap your strength
around me,
If I, by chance, should find the sunny way,
My garden plot were not so dear without thee,
This satisfying perfect summer day.

I dreamed of Heaven, but not with golden stair,
Thro' arch of Sweet-Briar Rose one entered There.
While underneath Forget-me-nots of blue,
With Primroses, and fragrant Violets grew.

A path of Daisies thro' a Bluebell dell
Sprang up and caught the Sunlight as it fell.
I should have known a company so fair
Would find a welcome from the Gardener There.

With outstretched hands one waited at the Gate
One I had missed and mourned—my long lost Mate.
Close gathered to the great heart of My Dear,
I sudden knew that Heaven was Now—and Here.

And we, who had a thousand things to say,
Anon, passed silent thro' this flowery way,
Hand clasped in hand, where Lavender was kist
By butterflies of gold and amethyst.

We two passed silent thro' this garden world,
Where flowers of Spring and Summer all unfurled
At once their varied beauties of the year—
Those blossoms that we knew and loved down here.

Long time we lingered in this Heavenly spot
The lonely years of parting all forgot,
Till from our happy footsteps as we trod
A fragrance rose which led us up to God.

With the drifting of the leaves my flowers are passing.

On some days, slowly and imperceptibly, on others, suddenly and completely.

THE PASSING OF THE FLOWERS

There have been times lately when I could scarcely find one perfect blossom for my breakfast table.

This is important to me if I would face the day with courage, and that is why, whenever possible, I carry my breakfast tray to this sheltered corner of my garden.

Here, in the early summer, the pink briar roses cluster, and some times, to my infinite delight, a freshly opened bud will fall across my table.

It is with eager steps I seek my breakfast-parlour through the summer days, never knowing what fresh treasure I shall find.

Sometimes it would seem as though a star had fallen in the night, and broken into little bits, strewing my bricks of red with blue Forget-me-nots.

And later in the season, when the Lavender comes — Lavender and Bumble Bees, and Butterflies white, and blue—I start the day with a song on my lips, and the glow of morning in my heart.

The flowers are passing with the year, but to-day, in this corner, the air is warm.

Again I share in the Poetry of the Garden, and the little Voices of the Summer have returned.

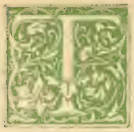
Today I hear the music of the trees, for I am kissed by the sun, and the Winter is still far distant.

. . . . . .

But the joy in the sun of a dying year must ever be brief and mingled with sadness.

Even as I write, there is a sudden chill in the air, and a few late roses, which had responded to the touch of unexpected warmth, look limp and colourless in the light which is already fading. The robin's song has suddenly ceased, and the empty silence fills me with loneliness—loneliness and memories.

Yet the old year passes into the new, and we await the joy of little things new-born . . . . . I know that there is no death. Those that have passed from sight are just asleep, to wake again, like the trees and the blossoms in God's Own Springtime.



he flowers are holding revel to-night
For the garden is flooded with
strange moonlight,
From out the deep shadows leap dancing
Things
While down, from the tree-tops, come Spirits
with wings.

MOONSHINE I'm glad I arose in these mystical hours
And opened my casement to gaze at my flowers.

For now sweetest music is borne on the air
A moonlight Sonata is calling me there
And out of my room, in the warm still night,
All wrapped in a mantle of silvery light,
I hurriedly pass with my eager feet,
These wonderful guests of the night to greet.

But the music is ceasing, and dying away,
Oh where are the dancers so dainty and gay?
Only white faces of flowers I see,
Only the Starlight, and Moon mystery:
I have frightened away the spirits with
wings,
And the shadows are hiding those dancing
Things.

. . . . . .

Blinded with tears of regret and surprise,
I wake for the moonlight is dazzling my eyes.

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